

CLAIMS

Having thus described the aforementioned invention, we claim:

1. A therapy device for providing air to a patient's upper body, said device comprising:

5 a tube having a first leg, a second leg, and a crosspiece, said tube having an orifice for an air supply hose, said tube having a plurality of exhaust ports;

a base sheet attached to said crosspiece, whereby said base sheet holds said tube in a fixed position when inflating and deflating said tube; and

10 a cover sheet attached to said first leg and extending to said second leg, said tube positioned between said cover sheet and said base sheet.

2. (Intentionally omitted)

3. The device of Claim 1 wherein said first leg, said second leg, and said crosspiece define a U-shaped opening sized to accommodate a head of a patient between said first leg and said second leg, and said first leg and said second leg
15 having a length sufficient to extend from a shoulder of said patient to a crown of said head of said patient.

4. The device of Claim 1 wherein said first leg, said second leg, and said crosspiece define a U-shaped opening having a width and a length, said width is defined by a distance between said first leg and said second leg, said width being
20 greater than 6 inches and said width being less than 12 inches.

5. The device of Claim 4 wherein said first leg and said second leg each have a leg length, said leg length defining said length of said U-shaped opening, said length greater than 10 inches and said length less than 18 inches.

6. The device of Claim 1 wherein said tube further includes a first tube sheet and a second tube sheet, said tube formed by overlaying said first tube sheet and said second tube sheet and joining said first tube sheet and said second tube sheet at a common outside edge.

5 7. The device of Claim 6 wherein said plurality of exhaust ports are a plurality of openings formed in said tube.

8. The device of Claim 6 wherein said plurality of exhaust ports are a plurality of slits formed in said tube, each of said plurality of slits positioned substantially parallel to a longitudinal axis of said tube proximate to each of said
10 plurality of slits.

9. The device of Claim 6 wherein said plurality of exhaust ports are defined by an air permeable portion of said tube.

10. (Intentionally omitted)

11. The device of Claim 6 wherein said plurality of exhaust ports are
15 located adjacent to said common outside edge.

12. The device of Claim 6 wherein said first tube sheet has an amount of excess material that is folded parallel to an axis of said first leg, said fold being joined with said second tube sheet at said common outside edge.

13. The device of Claim 1 wherein said tube further includes a first
20 appendage,

said first appendage connected to and extending substantially perpendicular to said first leg at a first leg end distal to connection of said first leg to said crosspiece.

14. A therapy device for providing air to a patient's upper body, said device comprising:

a tube having a first leg, a second leg, and a crosspiece, wherein said first leg, said second leg, and said crosspiece defining a U-shaped opening, said tube
5 having an orifice for an air supply hose, said tube formed by overlaying a first tube sheet and a second tube sheet and joining said first tube sheet and said second tube sheet at a common outside edge;

a plurality of exhaust ports formed in said tube;

a base sheet attached to said crosspiece, whereby said base sheet holds said
10 tube in a fixed position when inflating and deflating said tube;

at least one securing tab extending from said common outside edge and attached to said base sheet; and

a cover sheet attached to said first leg, said cover sheet being transparent and extending to said second leg, said tube positioned between said cover sheet
15 and said base sheet.

15. The device of Claim 14 wherein said U-shaped opening is sized to accommodate a head of a patient between said first leg and said second leg, and said U-shaped opening has a length sufficient to extend from a shoulder of said patient to a crown of said head of said patient.

20 16. The device of Claim 14 wherein said first tube sheet has an amount of excess material that is folded parallel to an axis of said first leg, said fold being joined with said second tube sheet at said common outside edge.

17. The device of Claim 14 wherein said plurality of exhaust ports include a means for exhausting a medium from said tube into said U-shaped opening.

25 18. The device of Claim 14 wherein said plurality of exhaust ports include a plurality of openings in said tube.

19. The device of Claim 14 wherein said plurality of exhaust ports include a plurality of slits formed in said tube, each of said plurality of slits positioned substantially parallel to a longitudinal axis of said tube proximate to each of said plurality of slits and adjacent to said common outside edge.

5 20. (Intentionally omitted)

21. A therapy device for providing heated air to a patient's upper body, said device comprising:

a means for releasably containing a first quantity of a medium;

10 a means for connecting a source of said first quantity of said medium to said means for containing;

a means for exhausting a second quantity of said medium from said means for containing;

a means for securing said means for containing in a fixed position adjacent to an upper body member; and

15 a means for directing said second quantity of said medium over said upper body member.

22. A method for fabricating a therapy device for providing heated air to a patient's upper body, said method comprising the steps of:

20 (a) forming a first tube sheet and a second tube sheet with a complementary shape, said complementary shape being generally U-shaped and having a first leg, a second leg, and a crosspiece;

(b) attaching said first tube sheet to said second tube sheet at an outside common edge such that said first tube sheet and second tube sheet form a tube when inflated;

(c) forming exhaust ports in said first tube sheet and said second tube sheet;

(d) attaching said first tube sheet and said second tube sheet to a base sheet;

5 (e) attaching a cover sheet to said first tube sheet, said cover sheet being attached by fixing one end of said cover sheet to said first leg, said cover sheet extending to said second leg.

23. The method of Claim 22 a therapy device wherein said step of forming exhaust ports includes cutting slits in said first tube sheet and said second tube
10 sheet.

24. The method of Claim 22 a therapy device wherein said step of forming exhaust ports includes cutting apertures in said first tube sheet and said second tube sheet.

25. (Intentionally omitted)

15 26. A method for selectively warming a patient's upper body, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) arranging a therapy device to form a thermal warming zone around an upper body portion of a patient, said therapy device including an inflatable tube having an inlet connection for receiving a thermally controlled medium and a
20 plurality of exhaust ports for directing said thermally controlled medium into said thermal warming zone;

(b) positioning a portion of the patient over a base sheet attached to said inflatable tube such that said plurality of exhaust ports are positioned proximate a selected portion of the patient, whereby said therapy device is restricted from
25 selected movement;

(c) inflating said therapy device with said thermally controlled medium;

(d) exhausting said thermally controlled medium from said therapy device; and

(e) releasably covering said upper body portion to direct said exhausted medium to said upper body portion by positioning a cover over said patient, said
5 cover attached to said inflatable tube along an edge of said cover.